

REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's thorough consideration provided in the present application. Claims 1-3 are currently pending in the instant application. Claim 1 is independent and claim 1 has been amended. Reconsideration of the present application is earnestly solicited.

Reasons for Entry of Amendment

As discussed in greater detail hereinafter, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102 are improper and should be withdrawn. If the present application is not passed to Issue, Applicants submit that the finality of the Final Office Action mailed on December 14, 2004 should be withdrawn.

In accordance with the requirements of 37 CFR 1.116, Applicants respectfully request entry and consideration of the foregoing amendments as they remove issues for appeal and place the current application in a condition for allowance.

Priority

It is gratefully acknowledged that the Examiner has recognized the Applicants' claim for foreign priority. In view of the fact that the Applicants' claim for foreign priority has been perfected, no additional action is required from Applicants at this time.

Drawings

It is gratefully acknowledged that the Examiner has approved the Formal Drawings submitted by Applicants on February 4, 2004. Accordingly, no further action is required from Applicants with respect to the drawings.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-3 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being allegedly anticipated by Yamagishi (U.S. Publication No. 2003/0025805 A1). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants submit that the prior art of record fails to teach or suggest each and every limitation of the unique combination of limitations of the claimed invention. Accordingly, this rejection should be withdrawn.

For example, with respect to claim 1, Applicants submit that the prior art of record fails to teach or suggest each and every limitation of the unique combination of limitations of the claimed invention, including the feature(s) of: "a selection device which prohibits the serial communication" with the lens apparatus and the camera body through the serial communication interface. Accordingly, this rejection should be withdrawn.

As discussed during the interview of December 4, 2004, the Examiner has relied upon the alleged teachings of Yamagishi to show a selection device that permits or prohibits serial communication between a lens apparatus (element 10 in Yamagishi) and a camera body (element 100). This interpretation of the

Yamagishi reference is respectfully traversed. Specifically, Applicants have clarified the term "serial communication" in a manner that prohibits the interpretation of the Yamagishi reference advanced by the Examiner. Specifically, the Yamagishi reference does not teach or suggest serial communication and/or the prohibition of serial communication.

A unique feature of the claimed invention is that the selection device can prohibit serial communication and switch to parallel communication. If there is any problem caused by the serial communication when the serial communication is available between the lens apparatus and the camera body, it prohibits the serial communication and switches to parallel communication. In contrast, Yamagishi describes communication between the camera main body (100) and the computer (400), but Yamagishi neither teaches nor suggests the camera and the lens communicating, and specifically does not teach or suggest prohibiting serial communication.

In the claimed invention, a lens apparatus is capable of performing serial communication with a camera body having a selection device that prohibits the serial communication. The claimed invention also provides unique, beneficial results not realized by the prior art of record. For example, in the case where there is trouble with establishing serial communication between the lens apparatus and the camera body, the serial communication may also be prohibited and the selection device may be utilized to switch communication to a parallel communication.

In accordance with the above discussion of the patent(s) relied upon by the Examiner, Applicants respectfully submit that these documents, either in combination together or standing alone, fail to teach or suggest the invention as is set forth by the claims of the instant application.

As to the dependent claims, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are allowable due to their dependence upon an allowable independent claim, as well as for additional limitations provided by these claims. Accordingly, this rejection should be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

Since the remaining references cited by the Examiner have not been utilized to reject the claims, but merely to show the state-of- the-art, no further comments are deemed necessary with respect thereto.

All the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed and/or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently pending rejections and that they be withdrawn.

In the event there are any matters remaining in this application, the Examiner is invited to contact Matthew T. Shanley, Registration No. 47,074 at (703) 205-8000 in the Washington, D.C. area.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit

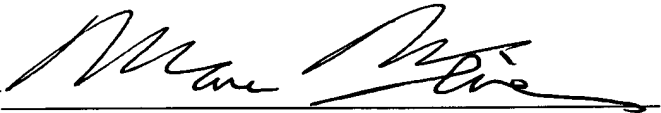
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Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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